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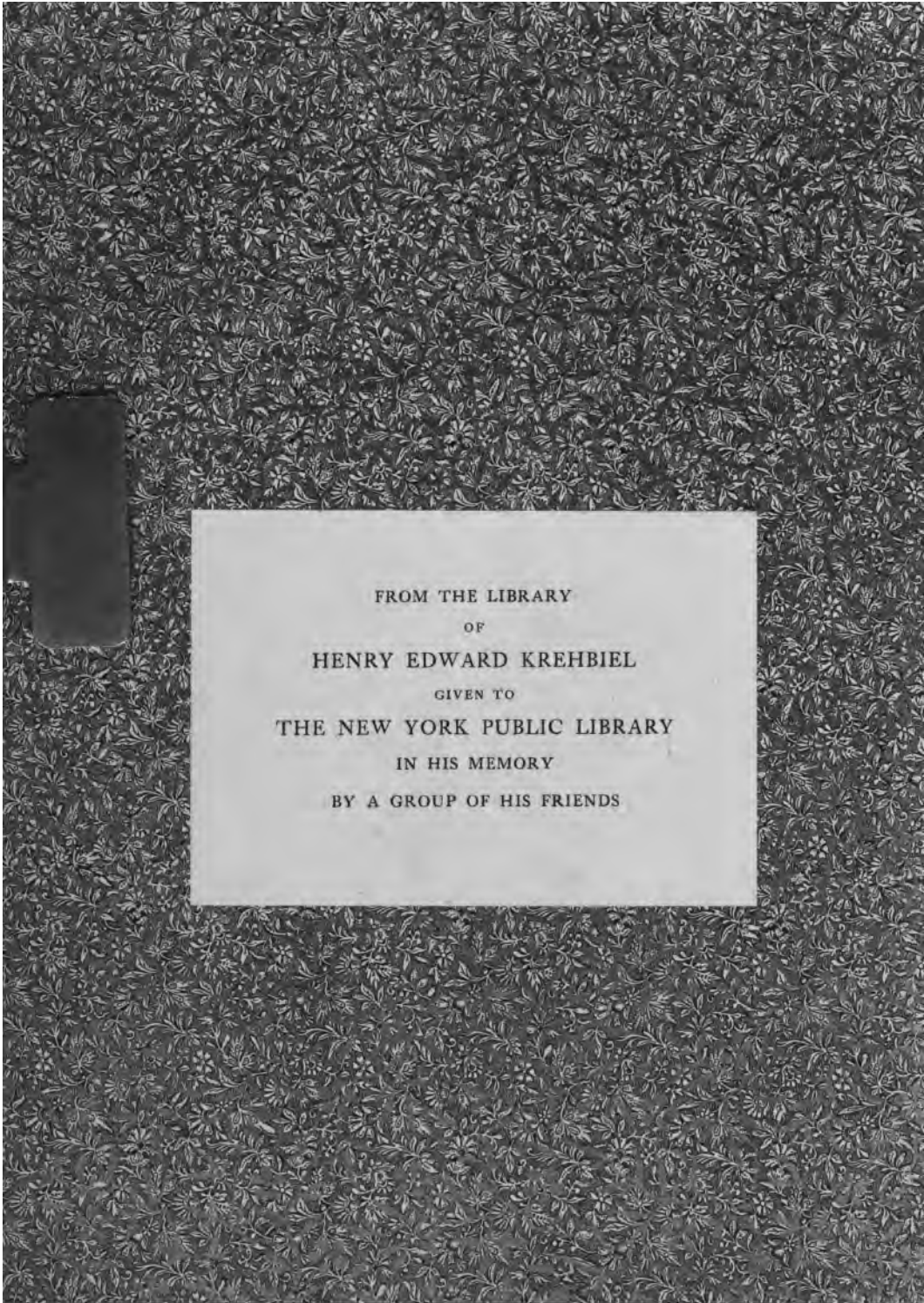


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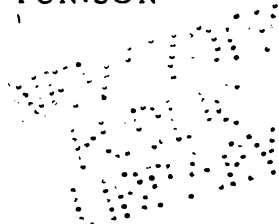
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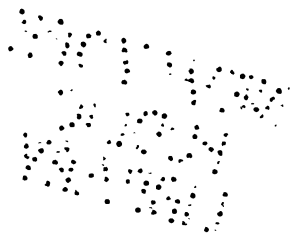
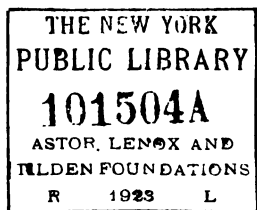
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## PREFACE.

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*The study which follows was originally published in THE DENISON UNIVERSITY QUARTERLY. It is meant as a suggestion for those who take interest in the topics to which it alludes. The basis for a restoration of the primitive Greek music can be found, perhaps, only in a summary of results from a wide investigation of folk-music. Material for such a summary is growing rapidly in quantity at the present day through the efforts of folklorists among primitive races in all parts of the world. It may be discovered that the classical and post-classic treatises are of value only by way of restraint and not by way of guidance. The present writer makes no pretense to originality except as to the general scheme of the essay. In some places the earliest authorities were out of his reach at the time of writing. But his secondary sources were worthy of credence. He takes pleasure in acknowledging an indebtedness to Mr. H. E. Krehbiel which is evinced on almost every page that follows. That Mr. Krehbiel and he hold different opinions is all the better, considering the doubts that embarrass the discussion. The reader thus gets a glimpse of two sides of a subject that has as many facets as Roger Bacon's multiplying glass. Acknowledgement is also due to Professor W. H. Johnson for his kindness in helping forward the little task now finished. Those who like a fancy of the kind are welcome to see in the red covers of this pamphlet a sentimental reference to the robe of the heroine in Grillparzer's play of "Sappho."*



## A Study of the Sapphic Stanza.

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THE name Sappho is suggestive not more of poetry than of music. To understand the metrical forms which she used, it is not merely necessary to study them from the point of view taken by the student of prosody; but the effort should be made, beset as it is with difficulties owing to the lack of information, to discover the relations of these metrical forms to music as Sappho and her Lesbian contemporaries understood the arts of verse-making and song. The fact that the subject cannot be treated with certainty need not prevent the attempt from being useful. It is reason for complaint against Henry Thornton Wharton, that his charming edition of the fragments of Sappho<sup>1</sup> contains so little on this point. In a book like Mr. Wharton's, which appeals to all who have the tastes of the bibliophile, whether they care for Greek learning or not, such a discussion would meet many minds untouched by tradition, and in time one of these might give scholars fruitful hints about problems which can never be solved by mere learning. It is not to the point to say that certain German authors have discussed these topics. The persons whose mere feelings might guide them right in this matter are just the ones who will never read, say, C. F. Neue's Latin treatise<sup>2</sup> on the metres used by Sappho. They need to have the case stated for them in language which they can understand. No promise is here implied that the

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<sup>1</sup> SAPPHO. *Memoir, Text, Selected Renderings and Literal Translation.* By Henry Thornton Wharton, M. A. Oxon. The book has passed through three editions.

<sup>2</sup> SAPPHO. *FRAGMENTA edidit C. F. Neue.*

present paper will supply the want. Its only purpose is to set forth a theory, with such an analysis of previous discussions of Greek poetry and music as seem suited to the purpose. With this explanation, no express warning is needed against the too hasty acceptance of any statement made by the writer. The need of putting the whole essay in this tentative form is the greater, because in some important cases the signification of technical terms as commonly given is disputed and practically new meanings are given to words more or less familiar.

Setting aside the personal equation involved in Sappho's own genius, the problem is: How was the particular verse form known as the Sapphic stanza originated and developed? The reader probably is familiar enough with classic prosody to know that this stanza is only one of the forms which Sappho used, and may easily recall specimens of it to mind, for example this from Sir Edwin Arnold's translation of Sappho's first ode:

Be it who it may be, he that flies shall follow,  
 He that rejects gifts, he shall bring thee many;  
 He that hates now shall love thee dearly, madly  
     Aye, though thou wouldst not.

or this, from Catullus's version of the second ode:

Lingua sed torpet; tenuis sub artus  
 Flamma demanat, sonitu suopte  
 Tintinant aures, gemina teguntur  
     Lumina nocte.

In the light of the model set by Sappho, there is a defect in Sir Edwin Arnold's lines in comparison with those of Catullus which are as nearly as possible what Sappho herself might have written if she had been Latin instead of Greek. But Arnold's version gives a better notion of the rapid movement characteristic of the Greek original than do most other attempts to imitate the stanza in English.



It may seem that the origin of a given form of metre is a very simple affair. The poet put his mind to it and thought out something. This may have happened in modern times, but it does not seem to be true of the more unconscious art of an earlier age. The disposition of a race had a great deal to do with the thinking and the utterance of the individual poet. The reminiscence of a whole civilization is packed in the Sapphic stanza, if only this reminiscence could be properly interpreted. It must be remembered that the greatest of woman poets stood in the dawn of the historic life of Greece. Mr. Wharton points out that she was contemporary with Jeremiah, the prophet of the Hebrew decadence ; with Nebuchadnezzar, the last restorer of Babylonian power ; with Solon, the lawgiver of Athens, whose personal identity is beyond question. She lived on an island, a tiny country, within reach of all the agitations of Asia Minor, and so far from the Greek mainland and from the rising forces of European life that she and all her compatriots were looked upon by Western Hellenes as aliens. The forces which had produced the Homeric epics, in which Asiatic and European life was not yet differentiated, were spent. The new forces that were to culminate in the Attic drama and the dialogues of Plato were only beginning to be felt. So far as the Greeks were concerned, then, the period in which Sappho lived was comparable in many respects with that which intervened between classic literature and the literature of modern times. Hers was, so to speak, the Greek middle age. Before it the Greeks were still defective in culture, and, like the Frankish barbarians, waged war to the eastward against civilization which they first hated and then strove to imitate and surpass. While they were perfecting a social and national life, they were, just as was the case in mediaeval times, slow to develop a new literature as characteristic of their changed condition as the epic had

been of an older time. Song and the metrical forms suited to song engrossed them. The multitude of mediaeval hymns and ballads<sup>1</sup> have their counterpart in the fragments of verse left by the Greek citharœdists and aulodists. In perfection of form, in the adaptation of sound to sense, in simplicity, directness, and variety of motive within narrow limits, the productions of these two periods in literary history have no rivals except among themselves. So Mahaffy says of Alcaeus and Sappho: "Their lyrics apart from the difficult dialect are far more easy to comprehend than the more elaborate rhythms of Pindar, Alcman or Stesichorus. For, instead of the long, complicated systems, which required all the help of music, and even of dancing, to bring out the symmetry, and carry on the hearer to the antistrophe and the epode, the odes of Alcaeus and Sappho were constructed in short, simple stanzas which were easily comprehended and recitable even without their musical accompaniments. They were, in fact, the earliest specimens of what is called in modern days the song or ballad, in which the repetition of short rhythms produces a certain pleasant monotony, easy to remember and easy to understand."<sup>2</sup> It will be seen in time that Mahaffy has here spoken more wisely than he meant.

The development of the ballad and the music went hand in hand. Terpander,<sup>3</sup> also a Lesbian, who lived just

<sup>1</sup>In no language, however, at least to me, does the rhyme make such a pleasing and powerful impression as in Latin; the rhymed Latin poems of the Middle Ages have a peculiar charm. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, HOLDEN and KEMP's translation, Vol. III, p. 205.

<sup>2</sup>MAHAFFY. *A History of Greek Literature*, Vol. I, p. 181.

<sup>3</sup>Terpander ex Methymna vel ex Antissa Lesbios, vel ex Arna, Cumæ Boetus, non Archilochus tantum sed et Thaletæ Cretensium de quo mox dicam, antiquior fuit si audimus Plutarchum Liber de Musica. FABRICIUS. *Bibliotheca Graeca*. Vol. I, p. 234. Authorities differed however even in antiquity as will be seen by consulting the remarks and copious references of Fabricius who appears in this matter and many others to be as good an authority as any of a later day.

before the time of Sappho and may even have been still alive when she was young, had given an impetus to the art through his acquaintance with the Egyptians. For example, tradition ascribes to him the introduction among the Greeks of the seven-stringed lyre. There is a dispute among moderns as to whether this tradition is to be taken literally or is to be interpreted as meaning simply the improvement of the Greek musical scale. As Terpander is said to have composed many pieces both of verse and music in which great novelties were introduced, he was possibly acquainted with Egyptian instruments of better pattern than the lyre, for example the *bent* or harp and the instrument with frets, which Sir J. Gardiner Wilkinson calls a guitar. For the novelties attributed to him did not occur in his poems, which were often taken from Homer or were modelled upon the works of that poet. The meaning is plainly that Terpander, like the singer in the *Odyssey*, used the heroic line as the basis of his music with no thought of the effects that might be obtained from more varied metrical schemes.<sup>1</sup> Though he had emancipated himself from the cithara in music, he was still in bonds to its poetical offspring. It is generally conceded that without the Greek lyre, the Greek epic metre would never have been invented. The two simple tripodies from which the six-foot dactylic verse seems to have originated must have served a much less refined purpose. They were

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<sup>1</sup> See however, BOECKH, *de metr. Pind.* p. 201; Nomi quidem qui aut αὐλοῦχοι aut κιθαρωδοί, antiquitus simplicis erant metri, citharodici ex hexametris heroicis, quamquam et τροχάιος νόμος laudatur, aulodici ex distichis elegiacis. After quoting this remark, SCHUSTER, *De Veteris Orphicae Theogoniae Indole et Origine*, adds the conjecture: Fortasse etiam illius insignis ὀρθίου νόμου Terpandri metrum spondaicum erat (v. *Herod.* I, 24, 21, et quae Stein adnotat). . . . Ceterum antiquissimum Graecorum nomum per longum tempus mere fuisse hexametrum judicat Ritschl.

adapted to the barbaric rattle, the counterpart of which can still be heard at times on the Aegean islands. But formally they had been too long forgotten for Terpander to have recognized their relation to his own favorite metre, though he had doubtless heard them in Aeolian folk-songs fragments of which have been preserved to the present day. They probably sounded to him like something remote and antiquated; and yet when the truly artistic Lesbian metres came into being they echoed the primitive tripod quite unmistakably. But this was the result of an analytical process to which the hexameter was subjected rather than a conscious effort to adapt old folk-song to new purposes. The dominance of the epic line in Terpander's time is shown by the fact that his rival Olympus,<sup>1</sup> a native of the Asiatic mainland, also used it exclusively. Plutarch says that both these poets tried a varied style of recitation, but found it distasteful to their audiences, and so they abandoned it, limiting themselves to one musical mode and to a lyre of three strings, although they were well acquainted with the use of a greater number. The fact that the Lesbian musicians were called off successively to Sparta, the least flexible of the Greek states, throughout the better part of a century, helps doubtless to account for their decline toward conservatism. Sparta became the home of Terpander, the first, as well as Periclitus, the last, of the Lesbian citharædists. Thus it remained for Alcaeus and Sappho to carry out in the genial but restricted society of Mitylene the artistic suggestions

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<sup>1</sup> Olympi nomine duo memorantur a Plutarcho Lib. de Musica. Prior, a quo montem Olympium dictum volunt, est Mysius Marsyæ discipulus Hyagnidis filii, qui primus artem tibia canendi invenit. . . Sed forte alii suspicabantur, musicos potius concentus modulatum esse quam carmina vel poemata composuisse, perinde ut alterum Olympum juniorem, Phrygium tibicinem, quem Midæ temporibus floruisse Suidas notavit. FABRICIUS, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 107.

of Terpander by which he gained the fame that his later writings ill deserved. They had the benefit also both in verse and music of the innovations made by the irritable Parian Archilochus.<sup>1</sup> Speaking of literary form Professor Mahaffy says: "It seems to me that the direct heredity of Alkaïos, at all events, from Archilochus has been very much overlooked; although Horace points out clearly the metrical filiation. No two poets in Greek literature were so like in temper. Not to speak of distinct copying, such as the confession of throwing away his shield in Alkaïos, we can see in the abuse of Pittakos a political counterpart to the attacks on Lycambes. We can see the same employment of very various metres, the same enjoyment of love and wine, of rambling about the world and of adventure. Neither poet uses the unvarnished dialect of his native town, but from the experience of travel, and probably from purely artistic reasons, both write the literary form of their national speech. So far as the above poems of Archilochos are extant, they seem also the distinct forerunners of the poetry of Sappho; there is the same flow of passion, the same indescribable power of painting the agony of desire. In these features they both contrast with the gentler and more refined complaints of Mimnermus, who naturally uses the calm elegiac metre, while the others felt the necessity of shorter and more hurried rhythms. The dialect of Sappho is more strictly the local language of Mitylene and not so purified as that of Alkaïos, but both were full of hard expressions which are perpetually commented on by lexicographers."<sup>2</sup> Close

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<sup>1</sup> Archilochus Parius Gygis temporibus vixit, ut auctor Herodotus Lib. I. c. 12. sive regnante Romulo ut Cic. I Tusc. hoc est circa Olymp. XV. quo tempore a Pariis colonia deducta est, cui deductioni prae-fuisse certe interfuisse Archilochum constat, etc. FABRICIUS op. cit. Vol. I. p. 572.

<sup>2</sup> MAHAFFY, op. cit. p. 181.

inspection of this passage rather reduces the debt of the Lesbian poets than otherwise. Enjoyment of love and wine and globe-trotting and adventure is not a proof of imitation; still less so are passion and the agony of desire. Persons having these in common might never have heard of each other. Indeed, while Alcæus may have borrowed specific features of his poetry from the Parian, all that Mahaffy says about Sappho seems to emphasize the narrow and insulated character of her training and inspiration. It is necessary to point this out because, if Chappell is right, Archilochus was far advanced in musical science. "Although Archilochus," says he, "is often ranked as the contemporary of Terpander, there was a wide musical step between them, if Archilochus played his accompaniments on the lyre under the voice part instead of in unison with it. According to Glaucus's account of Ancient Poets and musicians, quoted and approved by Plutarch, Terpander preceded Archilochus and upon that theory only is the account of his having played under the voice probable."<sup>1</sup> Even upon that condition it remains more than dubious. When this remark of Chappell was submitted to H. E. Krehbiel, the well-known musical critic, he wrote this marginal comment: "I cannot imagine what the basis may be of the theory that Archilochus played accompaniments 'under the voice-part.' This, of course, can only mean independent accompaniments, not a mere doubling of the melody on a lower octave; then the existence of harmony is a condition precedent, and it is not proved that the Greeks had a knowledge, or at least made use, of harmony. The quotation from Chappell, moreover, is suspicious from the fact that a well authenticated circumstance in the history of Archilochus is that

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<sup>1</sup> *The History of Music*, Vol. I. From the Earliest Records to the Fall of the Roman Empire. W. CHAPPELL. P. 34.

he made use of two oriental instruments instead of the kithara, to accompany those of his songs which were innovations. It is also surmised that he invented a form of melodramatic recitation which gave prominence to the instrumental part. If this is so, he was a fore-runner of Wagner who permits his voice to accompany a separate orchestral part. The melody lies in the accompaniment, the words are declaimed above it. This would make Archilochus a factor of tremendous puissance in the development of the ancient drama as well as the modern opera." Now if we consider that the time of Archilochus was one when the Greeks were making the acquaintance of a great variety of musical instruments and were doubtless charmed by the novelty of such things, Mr. Krehbiel's suggestions may lead us to conceive an unexpected state of affairs; namely, that Archilochus found the Greeks chanting their poetry and left them still chanting it, less uniformly simply because he gave them varied metres; but that with his instruments he gave them the idea of a tune, something which perhaps had never occurred to them before. It must be remembered that all these poets lived within two successive generations at the border line between mere folk-music and the self-conscious product of a nascent art. There is sometimes too little perspective in the treatment of Greek art and literature not only by ancient writers but also by those of modern times who have attempted to outline on one canvas the achievements of the Aegean peoples. It is plain that the music of Sappho's time could not have been that of Martianus, nor of Boethius, nor of Ptolemy, nor of Plutarch, nor of Aristotle and Plato, nor even that of Aristoxenus, and that the last named, in spite of the vigorous plea for the archaic method attributed to him, may have had only a clouded notion of what that method was; or, to put it in better form, may have lacked the skill to place his knowledge in

detail before his readers in a manner thoroughly to be understood. The musical science of the Greeks, if we would reduce it to the narrow lines of the Lesbian period, should be divested almost entirely of its mathematics, of its bewildering notation, of the technical description of modes. For music, so far as the Greeks were concerned, was then barely released from what may be called its instinctive phase. It had hitherto owed nothing to reflection. It had never yet been subjected to that critical analysis which renders a nomenclature indispensable.<sup>1</sup> It was still a matter of the emotions pure and simple, and was as yet in the way of transition from improvisation to fixed forms. In some cases, probably few rather than many, given melodies were definitively associated with certain forms of verse, but with the rest there was all the mutability that individual taste, hampered by imperfect art, could demand. Proof is wanting that even at this early period there was much left of the music attributed to the mythical period. Had there been important relics, they would have been held as sacred and might have produced a conservatism like that of Egypt or China. Whatever may be said of later Greek singing, that of the Lesbian period must have been entirely in the rhythmical stage, when tone was altogether subordinate to metrical forms and the

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<sup>1</sup> Note by H. E. KREHBIEL: I would not be so sure of this in view of the musical value of Sappho's verse. If you were speaking of ceremonial music the contention would be unassailable, but Sappho's verse suggests what I call Romantic music in which there was much less restriction, the poet-composer being free to use any tonal combinations that suggested themselves. I imagine that the songs sung by the maidens who formed Sappho's class in the art of the Muses were full of sensuous charm. Music must have become emancipated from much of its old canonic severity as soon as writing was invented and it was no longer necessary to adhere to strict formularies for the sake of the mnemonic element which played so important a rôle in antique art.



variations scarcely greater than those natural to the different vowels of speech. This opinion is sustained by the two facts accepted by all historians of Greek music :

First, that Greek music, both earlier and later, consisted almost entirely of rhythm.

Second, that every syllable, that is, every distinct vowel sound with its consonantal accompaniment, had a separate note.

In order to understand the value of these two facts, it may be well to go over what Plutarch puts into the mouth of Lysias, one of the persons in his *Dialogue on Music*, concerning the history of the art from mythical times down to those of Sappho. Lysias attributed to Heraclides the statement that Amphion was the first player on the cithara and the first composer for that instrument. As he was the reputed son of Zeus and Antiope, he may readily be supposed to have learned the art from his father. Among the contemporaries of Amphion were Linus in Eubœa, who made *threnoi*, funeral laments ; Anthes, of Anthedon in Bœotia,—who composed hymns ; Pieras, of Pieria, who chanted the praises of the muses ; Philammon, of Delphi, who sang the birth of Leto, Artemis, and Apollo, and first of all gathered a choir about the priests in Delphi ; Thamyris, the Thracian, who even ventured on a contest with the muses, his theme on that memorable occasion being the war of the Titans against the Gods ; Demodocus, of Corcyra, who sang the fall of Ilium and the marriage of Aphrodite and Hephaestus, and Phemius of Ithaca, who composed a chant on the voyage of those who returned from Troy with Agamemnon. It is unnecessary to point out the critical objections to these names. One reaches somewhat firmer ground with the mention of Terpander, who is described by Lysias as a maker of musical pieces for the cithara and such as were called Laws,

νόμοι.<sup>1</sup> The modern assumption is that these nomes were equivalent to melodies, but this is taking for granted just what remains to be proved. They may have been melodies in Plutarch's time and mere singsong recitations in the time of Terpander. Terpander gave words to each nome, taking passages from Homer, or composing pieces of his own upon the Homeric model, and adapted his works to performance in the games. To him also are attributed the names of many of the nomes. Clonas, who lived in the time of Terpander, is credited with similar musical compositions which were sung to an accompaniment on the aulos or flute. He is said to have used both epic and elegiac verse. Polymnestus the Colophonian imitated Clonas, using the same poetic forms. The allusions to metres are noteworthy as showing the comparatively undeveloped state of auletic music at a time but little earlier than the age of Sappho. If it was to the flute that the Greeks owed their elaborate choric rhythms, then at the middle of the seventh century they had most of their musical evolution still before them. In naming these men Lysias took occasion also to give the titles of the flute nomes attributed to them. Unfortunately he did no more. His reticence may have been due to the fact that the nomes were still in late times well-known, or that they were unknown, or finally to a reconditeness which made any particulars about them of

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<sup>1</sup>Videntur autem leges a Spartanis decantari solitae, modulos musicos adaptantibus Thalete Cretensi, Terpandro, Tyrtaeo aliisque. De Thalete jam superiore Lib. dictum a me est, et de Tyrtaeo hujus libri c. XII. De Terpandro ita Clemens Alex. i Strom. p. 308:

Μέλος τε αὖ πρῶτος περιέθηκε τοῖς ποιήμασι, τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίων νόμους ἐμελοποίησε Τέρπανδρος ὁ Ἀντισταῖος; ubi verbum ἐμελοποίησε interpres reddit; *numerosis versibus scripsit*, sed Marcus Meibomius ad Aristoxenum p. 76 rectius ita intelligit, ut leges Lacedaemoniorum a se, vel jam ante ab alio, versibus inclusas, modulandas atque decantandas populo exhibuerit Terpander Antissaenus.—FABRICIUS, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 541.

little value among the wine-cups. In following his list an effort has been made to bring together here some explanations more or less pertinent. Thus the *nomos Apothetos*, the Putting-Away Nome, may have some reference to the fact that the places into which misshapen children were thrown in Lacedæmon were called *Apothetai*. The *Nomos Elegos* is described as a song of mourning which from early times was adapted to the elegiac distich. However, the word *elegos* came into notice first at Athens in the time of Simonides, so that the use of it as a title by Clonas is unlikely, if not impossible. The *Nomos Komarchios* should be referred, perhaps, to the word *komarches*, a name for the chief officer of a village. It might have received its name from being customarily performed at the inauguration of officers. The *Nomos Schoiniōn* has the same name as that given to a small bird which lived among the rushes, *σχοῖνα*, at the brink of ponds and water-courses. The air called by this name was reckoned effeminate. Perhaps it made use of sounds resembling the note of the bird mentioned. The word would even admit of the meaning that the music called to mind the rustling of the rushes. The *Nomos Kepiōn* was said to have been named after Cepion, a pupil of Terpander. In some other cases the names of familiar melodies were referred to persons. But it is worth observing that the word *kepiōn* may be related to *κῆπος*, a garden or farm, so that the nome may have been adapted to rural festivities. The *Nomos Epikedios* was used as a dirge at funerals. The *Nomos Trimerēs*, that is tripartite, was attributed to the composer Sacadas,<sup>1</sup> who

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<sup>1</sup>NOTE BY H. E. K.—I fancy that these titles were like the titles of our hymn tunes, "Uxbridge," "Dennis," and the like; sometimes arbitrary, with no significance in the title, or having reference to the original use, like "Old Hundred" (correctly "Old Hundredth,") because it was first a setting of Psalm C. The meistersingers followed the same practice in the naming of their melodies.

is said to have taught choirs to sing in the three principal modes, first the Doric, then the Phrygian, and finally the Lydian, and this was called tripartite on account of the transposition.

At a later date a species of songs became popular under the name Polymnastia. As Polymnestus is credited with compositions of an obscene character, the nature of the Polymnastia can only be imagined. The nomes for the cithara and for the voice accompanied by the cithara, earlier far than those for the aulos and for auletic song, were arranged by Terpander and from him received their names. The musical value of these nomes is difficult to estimate. The Bæotian and Æolian Nome possibly had peculiarities suited to the tribal name given it, while the Trochaic and Acute Nome, it may easily be inferred, had a rapid movement and a high pitch. Then there was the Nomos Kepiōn and Terpandreios; as well as the Nomos Tetraoidios (literally, on four notes) which may have been similar to the Nomos Trimerēs but with three transpositions instead of two. Terpander also composed prooimia, preludes or overtures, to be sung with the cithara. These were, like the rest of Terpander's verse, in hexameter. It is noteworthy that so little distinction was made between music and poetry. The nomes are described not by their musical characteristics but by the metrical forms as though these only were to be considered. Lysias goes on, in fact, to say that all nomes for the cithara were anciently written in hexameter as evinced by the practice of Timotheus,<sup>1</sup> who, although he adopted a dithyrambic style, retained the epic verse in order that he might not violate the

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<sup>1</sup>Identity of metre between the original melody and the poems afterward used with it would follow as a matter of course.

"Timotheus Milesius, Poeta tragicus et dithyrambicus, musicusque celebris temporibus Euripidis. Hujus Timothei νόμους κιθαρηδικούς memorat Hephaestion in Enchiridio." FABRICIUS, op. cit. Vol. I, p. 694.

custom of ancient music. The group of tone-poets in which Terpander stood first consisted of Clonas, Ardalus the Troezenian, and Polymnestus. Some of Terpander's compositions were, however, attributed to Philammon the Delphian. On the whole, from the time of Terpander to that of Phrynis, singing to the accompaniment of the cithara retained its simplicity. For, though Plutarch does not say so, the use of the word *nomos* to characterize the ancient musical forms is sufficient proof that these forms having once been invented, there was little or no overstepping from one to another, since each was assigned to its own place in public or private festivities. This seems to be what Aristides Quintilianus means when he says that the ancients made use of songs, rhythms and dances, not only at private feasts, but in the public service of the gods, singing certain tunes fixed by law, which, indeed, they called *nomoi*.<sup>1</sup> This opinion of Aristides is not inconsistent with the statement of Martianus Capella that tragic song belonged to the lowermost, the dithyramb to the middle, and the nomes to the higher tones of the successive tetrachords into which the musical scale was divided by the Greeks.<sup>2</sup> This is practically an after thought, and it attributes to the *nomos* what was really a general characteristic of all the extremely antique music, which was used mainly in the ecstasy of religious fervor, of passion, of intoxication, or in the excitement of battle. Aristides Quintilianus describes more at length the relation of given

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<sup>1</sup>ARISTIDES QUINTILIANUS. *De Musica*.

<sup>2</sup>Melos autem actus acuti aut gravioris soni. Modulatio est soni multiplices expressio. Melopoeiæ species sunt tres : Hypatoides, Mesoides, Netoides. Hypatoides est quæ τραγικός appellatur, quæ per graviore sonos constat; Mesoides, quæ ἀλύπαρα ἰάμβικα nominat, quæ tonos aequales mediosque custodit: Netoides, quæ et νομικός consuevit vocari, quæ plures sonos ex ultimis recipit.—MARTIANUS CAPELLA, Lib. IX.

emotions expressed in verse, the senses, virtues, temperaments, the elements and the seasons, to the tetrachords and even to the individual tones of the voice. The use of term *nomos* is only one of the frequent indications that the ancients conceived a regulated relationship between certain categories of ideas and the tonal system. A rigorous observance of this relation must have excluded all freedom of composition in the modern sense of the word.

To the list of *nomoi* already mentioned, Plutarch adds one which he attributes to Olympus the Phrygian. It was for the aulos and was called the Nomos Polukephalos, many-headed, because it represented the hissing sounds made by the serpents on the Gorgon's head. One might almost suspect that Sophocles had this ancient composition in mind when he put into the mouth of Athena, the Medusa-bearer, this sibilant alliteration:

τοὺς δὲ σώφρονας  
θεοὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ στυγούσι τοὺς κακοὺς.<sup>1</sup>

To Olympus was attributed also the Nomos Harmatios, chariot song, which may have attempted to imitate the sound of chariots in motion, though Euripides used the phrase *melos harmatios* to describe a dirge.<sup>2</sup> Possibly the air was the same, the tempo and expression only being varied. Plutarch cites Glaucus, an ancient writer of Magna Graecia, to show that Stesichorus adapted the nome to a dactylic measure. Thus, after all, its peculiarities may have been wholly rhythmical. Another ancient refrain for the aulos was the so-called Nomos Kradios, cheese curdled with fig-juice, an air which Hesychius<sup>3</sup> says was played when the *katharmoi* or *pharmakoi*, vagabonds chosen to suffer vicarious punishment for the people, were flogged

<sup>1</sup> SOPHOCLES, *Aias*, 132, 133.

<sup>2</sup> EURIPIDES, *Orestes* l. 1385.

<sup>3</sup> Cited by LIDDELL and SCOTT.

with branches of the fig-tree.\* We may easily fancy it to have been a sort of Rogue's March.

So, says Plutarch's Lysias, the first revolution in music was due to Terpander, the second, to Thaletas the Gortynian, Xenodamas the Cytherian, Xenocritus the Locrian,<sup>1</sup> Polymnestus the Colophonian, and Sacadas the Argive. The school of Thaletas, Xenodamas, and Xenocritus composed pæans. These were choral hymns or chants addressed to Apollo or Artemis, the burden being Iē Paian or Iō Paian. In Homer's time Paian, the Healer, had been a personal deity, but later he became merely an attribute to the bow-god and the bow-goddess. This species of song was used particularly in thanksgivings for deliverance from evil, and it was contrasted with cries for help, wailing, and the like. On rare occasions the pæan was addressed to other gods besides the two mentioned. After a victory in battle it became a song of triumph in honor of Apollo and by a very natural process was transferred to the moment before an action and was then conceived of as an appeal to Ares. Because it elated the spirits, it was at length sung at the beginning of all important undertakings and even at feasts, as stirring military airs are often sung at the present day. Those who imitated Polymnestus were makers of Nomoi Orthioi, high-pitched military airs, associated in name closely with the Greek tactics, *orthioi lochoi* being the words used to describe the long, straight, well-closed ranks of men in phalanx ready for battle. The pupils of Sacadas composed elegies for the flute. Xenodamas is said to have composed hyporchemes, choral hymns to Apollo usually in Cretic verse so

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<sup>1</sup> Xenocritus Locrensis per omnem vitam oculis captus teste Heraclide in Rep. Locr. ipse fuit, ac vel pæanas vel dithyrambos scripsit, et a Plutarcho Lib. de Musica antiquissimis pæanum scriptoribus Thaleti ac Xenodamanti accensetur. Incertum idemne fit Xenocrates quem ex Aristoxeno memorat Laertius. FABRICIUS. op. cit. Vol. I, p. 599.

nearly like paeans that it was not always easy to distinguish the two kinds of music from each other. It is added, however, that the hyporchemes were of a lively character, accompanied with dancing and pantomime. Athenæus compares them to the *kordax*, an indecent dance in the Old Comedy.<sup>1</sup> To Thaletas Plutarch attributes the invention of the pæonic metre which used a long syllable and three short ones in varied relations, and the Cretic rhythm, two long syllables and one short one. Xenocritus is credited with *hypotheseis*, themes so-called, which were in the form of dithyrambs, resonant verses in honor of Bacchus set to music in the Phrygian mode.

These particulars help to make real to the mind the vast activity in musical study which characterized the brief period of the Lesbian supremacy in art. But Sappho belonged to the earlier half of this period. Of all the musical refinements which Plutarch and others describe, she could have known only those introduced by Terpander and Archilochus and those which became known in her lifetime. Of the modes, she could have known at the outset only the three most ancient, the Doric, Phrygian and Lydian. The tradition that she herself invented the Mixolydian mode is rendered dubious by the fact that in the next generation after her, the mathematical and musical expert Pythagoras, who must have known all that the Greeks had accomplished up to his time, mentioned only the three national modes. The musical historian, Emil Naumann, mentions a relief in terra-cotta found in the island of Melos which represents the poetess playing on a six-stringed lyre. But if this be anything more than a vagary of comparatively late art, its only value is to cast doubt on Terpander's seven-stringed instrument. For Sappho would certainly prefer the latter if it was in exist-

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<sup>1</sup> ATHENÆUS. *Deipnosoph.* See LIDDELL and SCOTT sub voce.



ence. The story that she invented the barbiton or many-stringed lyre discredits itself. Her poetry, so far as it remains to us, is not of the kind to require such an instrument. The point is well made by the historian Burney that the whole tradition of Sappho's inventive skill may be referred to her one great achievement, the Sapphic stanza. His words are interesting for various reasons. "The Lydian mode," he says, "was the highest of the five original modes, having its lowest sound, *Proslambanomenos*, upon F sharp, the fourth line in the base. The Mixolydian was still higher by half a tone; the Hypermixolydian, a minor third higher, and the Hyperlydian, a fourth higher. Plato, desirous of simplifying music and keeping the scale within moderate bounds, complains in the third book of his Republic of the licentiousness of these acute modes. Now, if the only difference in the modes was the place they occupied in the great system, with respect to gravity or acuteness, the invention, as it was called, of this Mixolydian mode, may have been suggested to Sappho by her having a voice of higher pitch than her predecessors; she was, perhaps, the Agujari of her time, and could transcend the limits of all former scales with equal facility. But though nature may have enabled this exquisite poetess to sing her verses in a higher key than anyone had done before, yet as it is allowed but to few to surpass the common boundaries of human faculties and talents, it is probable that her successors, by attempting, with inferior organs, to ascend those heights, had given offense to Plato, and determined him to prohibit the use of this mode in his Republic, as indecorous, and too effeminate even for women. If, however, it is true that the characteristic of the modes depended partly on rhythm or cadence, it seems not an improbable conjecture that besides the difference of pitch, the novelty of Sappho's Mixolydian mode might, in a great measure, consist in the first

applying to melody the measure called Sapphic, from her invention of it."<sup>1</sup> Only a few of the nomes mentioned by Plutarch were known to the singers of her youth. Many such pieces doubtless came into fashion in her life time. They were significant of a movement in which she participated. But her art could hardly have been much influenced by such nomes as the Schoinios or Polykephalos which depended on the close imitations of sounds in nature devoid of tone. How the hissing of serpents could be made tuneful it is impossible to conceive. Obviously it was the rhythm of the verse or of the succession of sounds which gave the composition musical value. Then there were the Apothetos, Komarchios, Epikedios, Harmatios, Kradios and Orthios, which, even if they existed in her time, could have been of little use to her, so far as can be judged from the meanings of words or the themes suggested. The hyporchemes, Polymnastia and dithyrambos belong probably to a later age. It is plain that the range of melody must have been as narrow in her time as the range of metre and rhythm was extended. We can readily conceive that she, as well as the other tone-poets of her time, would strive for the freedom of musical movement, and would prevent the musical treatment of her language from degenerating into mere intoning such as is now understood by recitative. Although recitative was prescribed for epic and tragedy and the epic line was the basis of the whole Lesbian musical art in her youth, yet she, in company with the writers of varied verse forms, must have made use of more extended tonal passages than were required by her predecessors. While we can conceive this, we must also admit that there is little in the writings left by the ancients to strengthen such

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<sup>1</sup> *A General History of Music*, etc., by CHARLES BURNEY, Mus. D., F. R. S. (Second Edition, 1789), Vol. I, pp. 383, 384.

a belief. When there seemed to be a movement toward freedom in an age long subsequent to that of Sappho, Spartan austerity and Attic philosophy joined hands with Athenian comedy to suppress it, and Timotheus of Miletus was nigh buried to his sandy scalp-lock under the maledictions of the stage.<sup>1</sup>

The tyranny of the word over the musical tone at so early a time as that of Sappho, must have been such that the singing voice was limited almost to the range of the speaking voice and, indeed, there are facts and traditions which suggest the inference that the Greeks never distinguished with the care of the moderns, between these two uses of the human organ. The fact that it was not uncommon to ornament set orations with metrical cadences indicates that the orators spoke in a singsong style. This monotonous but highly emotional manner could be depended on to affect strongly the feelings of an audience. Not only orations, but every public reading, involved this appeal to the laryngeal sympathies of the auditors. The anecdote of Æschines reading his speeches to some pupils while he was in exile may or may not be proof of this; but the story that the boy Thucydides wept while he listened to a passage of Herodotus read by the author, whether true or false, could have gained currency only in an age when such a fashion prevailed. It is absurd to suppose that the Greeks would attribute an effect so marked to the literary style of Herodotus's writings, since they are wholly devoid of anything like emotional effervescence. The recitative practiced by the *rhapsodoi* in repeating the Homeric poems remained the model for public speaking, even after it was found possible to write as well as talk in prose.

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<sup>1</sup> Note by H. E. K.—Timotheus must not be disposed of thus summarily. His sins were not all musical. See the decree of banishment in Boethius *De Musica*.

It must be remembered that even in times far later than those of Sappho, the rules of Greek music prohibited the passing beyond two tetrachords and prescribed to the singer in the most arbitrary manner the progression of intervals. The slavish observance of syllabic measure, in spite of the fact that the distinction between consonance and dissonance was understood, left no place for polyphony in the modern sense of the term. It could not even be conceived by the music writers of those times as an artistic possibility. With these facts in mind one comprehends how the antique world apprehended the legal character—as suggested in the word *nomos*—of the relationship between music and language; and the fact can be appreciated that, in so far as Greek melody was manifested in a single tune, born of the peculiarities of the text placed under it, it was to the verse and not to the tune that the ancient writers attributed such marvellous effects, as in the case of Orpheus, Amphion, and Arion. So Diodorus says of Orpheus that he surpassed all others in the art of poetry.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, it was the verse intoned, not the verse merely spoken, that possessed enchanting power.<sup>2</sup>

In another way this mastery of words, or rather syllables, over tones is evinced by a practice which survived in the music of the Churches both East and West, though it dated from the earliest times in pagan Greece and was familiar to the Egyptians. This was the custom of repeating a mere string of vowels with an accompaniment on an instrument. The method by which this was done in Egypt is thus explained by Demetrius Phalereus in a passage quoted by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and translated

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<sup>1</sup> DIODORUS SICULUS, Lib. IV. Cap. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Note by H. E. K.—Rather in the union of both elements. See *Studies in the Wagnerian Drama*, p. 7.

by Chappell: "The priests hymn the gods through the seven notes of the scale, sounding them in regular succession; and being accompanied by the pipe and the cithara [playing in octaves], the resounding of these notes is heard with very euphonious effect; whereas, he who omits the accompaniment of a musical instrument with his voice takes away nothing less than the due modulation and the fitting tone from the passages." Dionysius also says that the Egyptians called the tones in music after the names of the vowels in their language. Chappell, after translating the above passage, added: "This practice of carolling or singing to the gods was copied by the Greeks, who seem to have carrolled on four vowels, the Egyptians having only four. The vowels in both cases had probably some recognized meaning attached to them, as substitutes for certain words of praise, as was the case when the custom was transferred to the Western Church. The E U O A E retained in the Roman Catholic Church service is taken in the sense of Sæculorum Amen, being the vowels of these words without consonants. The Eastern Church has also its N O E A N E, N O N A N O E A N E, A N O A I S, and so forth."<sup>1</sup>

The presumption to be drawn from this practice is that by means of the obvious change of pitch between different vowels, even in the so-called monotonous chant

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<sup>1</sup> CHAPPELL, op. cit. pp. 53, 54. Note by H. E. K.—Dionysius in his tract on the art of interpretation says that the Egyptians called the tones in their music after the vowels in their language. This is the only intimation that has been preserved from ancient writers that the Egyptians had a musical notation and it does not go far. "Thus runs the enigmatic utterance of a later Greek or Graeco-Egyptian: In primitive times, when all sacred things were seven in number, Egypt had seven sacred letters, *φωνηρά*, by means of which the priests sang the praises of their gods, by sounding them in sequence; and the sound of these letters served them for the sound of Kithara and flute." HERDER, *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts*.

of barbaric races, tonal intervals became an object of scientific observation. That is, in the first place words were used, and then, when the tonal value of the vowels was perceived, these were used alone. The magico-religious tendencies of the Egyptians soon converted this form of vocalization into something sacred. While the Greeks had only the tetrachord, that is, before the time of Terpander, in the age preceding that of Sappho, it is plain that the natural variation in the vowel sounds was fully equal in extent to their field of observation as to the diversity of musical tones. At a much later time Aristides Quintilianus, doubtless expressing the common opinion of the Greeks, refined and attenuated by a long period of grammatical subtilization, wrote: "Now since melody, not only in odes [verses musically rendered], but in colons [verses prosodically rendered] because of the similarity which it has to instrumental sounds, is found to be pleasing to the senses, we choose letters [in making verses] fit to be sung. And so, inasmuch as there are seven vowels, counting both the long and the short, we discern their diversity. For always those which extend the mouth vertically have sounds which command the greater respect, and those which extend the mouth laterally are the weaker and more effeminate. For example, among the long vowels Omega is rotund, real and forcible, while Eta is feminine, for its breath is somehow filtered and diffused. Again, among the short vowels, Omikron is masculine, narrows the instrument of the voice and, almost before it produces the sound, snatches it away. But Epsilon is feminine, in some manner causing a hiatus in pronunciation. Of the vowels that are doubtful or common in quantity, Alpha is best adapted to melody, because, on account of its broad sound, it is easily prolonged, while with the others the case is different owing to their tenuity. Alpha, besides being common in quantity, is sometimes allied to

Eta. When it receives its own proper sound, it is masculine; but, if it is pronounced like Eta, it becomes feminine. Thus in the dialects diversities occur, as for example in the Doric and Ionic. For the Dorians, disliking the weak sound of Eta, made use of Alpha, while the Ionians in the same places prefer Eta. In such cases as have been defined Alpha is feminine. The same is true of Iota; but, if it is lengthened to the diphthong Alpha-Iota, it differs little from the masculine."<sup>1</sup> The significance of the vowels in Greek theories is shown further in the remark attributed to Nicomachus that the musical sounds of each of the seven spheres were differentiated by the vocal elements, that is by the vowels. In this rather curious schematism the moon was represented by Alpha, Mercury by Epsilon, Venus by Eta, the sun by Iota, Mars by Omikron, Jupiter by Upsilon, and Saturn by Omega.<sup>2</sup>

While the classification of the vowels as masculine and feminine seems fanciful, what Aristides Quintilianus means is plain enough, as any one can discover by observing what happens to the organs of speech in uttering the vowels. When he alluded to the fact that there were seven vowels, he was doubtless thinking also of the double tetrachord or octave which had seven intervals. It is clear, too, and this is a very important point, that he attributed to

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<sup>1</sup> Note by H. E. K.—In your interpretation of this passage you fall into harmony with Arends, *Sprachgesang der Vorzeit* i. e. Melodic Speech of Primitive Antiquity; but I fancy that possibly Aristides Quintilian does not try to carry more than this idea: In writing for music choose vowels that can best and most euphoniously be sung—a rule that is at the bottom of vocalization and plays a big rôle in the Italian vocal methods. But there surely was an intimate relation between vowels and tones in ancient music. The Teutonic peoples transferred some of the importance to the consonants when they invented alliteration and preferred it to rhyme.

<sup>2</sup> *Musici Scriptores Graeci* (Bibliotheca Teubneriana), p. 276.

poets the choice of words containing vowels suitable to produce a given musical effect.

There is an anecdote of Pythagoras which shows that even at a later time than that of Sappho the musical sense of the Greeks was not as accurate nor as extended as their musical mathematics. It is true that Chappell has discredited the story, but not with good reason. He would have us believe that Pythagoras could not have made such a mistake as was attributed to him. "Boethius had only read Claudius Ptolemy's works superficially, or else he would not have given currency to the popular story of Pythagoras and the hammers—that Pythagoras discovered the law of musical consonances through passing a blacksmith's and weighing the hammers that were striking fourths, fifths and octaves upon the anvil. Ptolemy denies the possibility of such consonances from one anvil, and even a little reflection might have taught Boethius that the tone of a bell cannot be altered in pitch by changing the weight of its clapper." But even if Ptolemy and Chappell are right, the anecdote may be true, with the explanation that Pythagoras confounded pitch with rhythm, his ear being less trained than his perception of number? For Macrobius, in dealing with the familiar tradition, declares that Pythagoras considered the music of the spheres necessary in the nature of things, but as proof by experiment or observation was difficult, he confirmed his opinion by analogy. Having by accident heard the smiths beating the red-hot iron with their hammers, he noticed a certain melody. In the first place he took this to be the result of the comparative strength of the men. He made them change hammers, and then found that the diversity of sound followed the hammers. From this he inferred that the secret of the matter was in the weight of the hammers, whereupon he had hammers made of varying weights and discovered that the sound was varied by each



of these. In this version of the tale the weight, that is the accentual value, of the hammers has an important place.<sup>1</sup> It has been shown in many cases that the practice is a rash one of discrediting ancient statements of fact because of modern knowledge showing an error in deduction or inference from facts asserted. Again the mere prevalence of the tale in the present case proves the defective observation of the Greeks upon the point of difference between tonal intervals and accentual ratios. That it remained for Ptolemy, so late in Greek history, to point out the mistake affords a strong presumption that it had been universal down to his time. His caution in combating it bears testimony to the same effect.

The possession by nature of the power to sing the scale, as it is understood by moderns, does not by any means presuppose intuitive knowledge of its intervals. A child can sound the tones and fractional tones in the range of its voice without knowing why, and the Greeks, especially those of high antiquity like Sappho, were mere children in knowledge, having the skill of practice but not the learning which comes of reflection. They were unconsciously wise, if one may use an epithet apparently so contradictory. Indeed, reflection, experiment, induction, were not possible with such instruments as the Greeks had down to the very days of Sappho's childhood. For it was not until the Egyptian ports were open to Greek trade, that Hellenic musicians could have had a stringed instrument, with belly, neck and frets like the African banjo. With the four-stringed lyre, the possible variations were

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<sup>1</sup>CHAPPELL, op. cit. 7. MACROBIUS, *In Somnium Scipionis* Lib. II, cap. 1.

NOTE BY H. E. K.—I think Chappell is in error and Pythagoras right. I have never looked into the matter; but in *Il Trovatore* there is a familiar anvil chorus in which the two notes are played by men striking with different sized hammers on the same anvil alternately.

too few to generalize upon. In Chappell's opinion the lyre before Terpander was little better than a pitch-pipe. "Nothing like a tune could be played upon it, but still there would have been music in the Greek sense of the word, since there was a combination of recitation, metre, and rhythm. In the Odyssey we read of a skilled singer and player on the lyre (phorminx), as having changed his chant 'to a new string upon a new peg.' That was the entire musical change, and it was evidently to raise or lower the pitch of his voice in recitation to suit a new sentiment in the poem. We may imagine his chant to have been something like what is now called intoning, or monotone. Monotone practically means only taking a pitch for the voice; for the articulation of the vowels would alone forbid monotone in the literal sense, since they of themselves form an ascending or descending scale of sounds. The Greek cry of woe, *ouai*, will suffice for the experiment. Everyone will find a difficulty in adhering to one uniform pitch of voice while pronouncing it."<sup>1</sup> As long as the musicians confined themselves almost exclusively to the hexameter, as was done by Terpander and Olympus, it is easy to concede the monotony of Greek music. The elegiac distich, sometimes used by Terpander, could not have changed the art greatly. It was mainly significant of the fact that the popular spirit was impatient of the narrow limits of the epic. This new spirit of art was so little aggressive that, in the words of Müller, it did "not venture to invent new metrical forms or even to give a new turn to the solemn hexameter by annexing to it a metre of a different character; content simply to remove the third and the last thesis of every second hexameter."<sup>2</sup> Colonel

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<sup>1</sup>CHAPPELL, op. cit. pp. 26 f. KREHBIEL, *Studies in the Wagnerian Drama*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>MUELLER and DONALDSON, *History of the Literature of Ancient Greece*.

Mure insists that the purpose of the elegiac was anything but musical. "In any theory as to the origin of this measure," he says, "we may safely assume by reference both to the general law of human invention and to the discriminating taste which marks the development of art among the Greeks, that the elegiac distich was called into existence by the object to which it was best adapted, that of modifying the old dactylic metre to familiar epigrammatic purposes."<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the modification was less the product of a deliberate, conscious effort than either of these distinguished historians seems to allow. There were also other metrical forms for music already in use in Lesbos in Sappho's time; for example, the epithalamium, the form of which had been fixed by Alcman or Stesichorus, so that Sappho had nothing to do but to give it that smoothness and delicacy of finish characteristic of her verse. There was also the stanza named after her distinguished fellow-townsmen, Alcaeus. The metrical inventions of Archilochus have already been mentioned. But all these taken together would not imply in Sappho's time anything like the skill shown in the earliest Greek musical composition known to us, a few of which, dating from the era of high Hellenic culture, are still extant.<sup>2</sup> Her composition, if it could be called such, must have been very simple. The long and the short syllables fixed the duration of the notes, any given unit of time having been chosen. The succession of the vowels gave an approximate

<sup>1</sup>MURE, *Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*. Vol. III, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>For modern transcriptions of these see SIR JOHN HAWKINS, *A General History of the Science and Practice of Music*, Vol. I, p. 54. BURNEY, op. cit. Vol. I, pp. 86 ff., 103. CHAPPELL, op. cit. pp. 169 ff. NAUMANN, *The History of Music*, Praeger's translation, Vol. I, pp. 140 f., and other works. The composition discovered a year or two ago in Greece and performed at Athens, was published in a modern form by *The Musical Times* of London. See also the new volume in the Bibliotheca Teubneriana—*Musica Scriptores Graeci*.

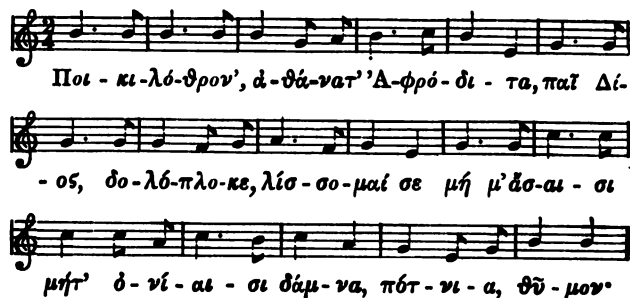
scheme for intonation. Regular recurrence of the same rhythm would tend to uniformity in the series of tunes for the different stanzas. If at the beginning each stanza was intoned according to its own vowels, in the end it came to sound like its companions. Thus such melody as there was grew out of compromise made doubtless quite unconsciously among the vowel tones. The effect would be monotonous, but not the less emotional and passionate. It would be subject to every momentary impulse of the heart and would realize all that power and expressiveness which the Greeks attributed to music. But it would hardly be music at all in the modern sense of the term.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Note by H. E. K.—I cannot conceive music which would have either individuality or beauty based on such hard and fast lines in respect of the relation between vowels and pitch. The melody would always be an accident and unless there was a marvellously ingenious theory of change effected by sequence or combination of vowel sounds the music would be frightfully monotonous. A melody based on the vowel-sound scheme would lack what I think we are bound to assume as an element in Sappho's music, viz., the melodic refrain on the last line. I have attempted to set the ode in both the old and new mixolydian modes. Of the former Sappho is reported to have been the first user,—so at least says Aristoxenus, though Plutarch, who bases his statements largely on Aristoxenus, ascribes its invention to Terpander. From Sappho the mode was transferred to the tragic poets for use in the choruses. According to Westphal's exposition of what Aristotle and Plutarch have to say about the harmonic treatment of the modes, the mixolydian mode is the equivalent of our key of E-minor with a minor second (F instead of F-sharp). The original scale in the books is b c d e f g a b, with e as the μέση κατὰ θείν μίξολυδίον which is the tone that determines the harmonic relationship. I have taken the liberty granted by latter-day studies of the transposition scales to transpose this scale a fourth higher—a proceeding which leaves its effects unimpaired. Concerning the emotional effect of the mixolydian mode the ancient writers are agreed. Plutarch describes it as παθητική; also as θρηνηδική, which epithet he shares with Plato (θρηνώδης, Rep. III, 398) who, for that reason, wished to prohibit the use of the mode in his ideal state. Aristotle says, ὀδυρτικωτέρα καὶ συνεστηκυῖα. I think you will find these characterizations exemplified also in my simple melody, especially if you avoid the temptation to drop into major harmonies at the eleventh measure. Use

The real advance marked by Sappho was in the art of rhythm. For a historic moment the whole evolution of Greek musical and metrical art rested with the Lesbians. That was the moment when first Terpander—who left his native island to awaken artistic feeling on the Greek mainland—and after him Alcæus and Sappho were supreme. The Lesbians, judged by their politics, were a nervous, excitable race, ready for any violence, given to public disorder, to rioting in the streets, in short, to practical an-

minor chords throughout, so that the influence of the minor second may be felt as something individual. I have confined the melody to six tones, so that Sappho might have played it on her lyre.



archy; and yet, endowed with an aptitude for commerce, an eager taste for travel and adventure, and a lively desire for beauty and luxury in every form, some of the forms being indescribable in modern writing. Two things did much to stimulate the natural genius of the people, and to perfect a civilization which, like the strange flower of Provence, no sooner bloomed than it withered. One generation, that of Sappho, lived through all that was significant in Lesbos. If tradition can be trusted, this generation furnished soldiers to Babylon, traders to Egypt, musicians to Sparta, colonists to the Far West, as it then seemed, of Italy and Sicily, scandal to comic writers for ages to come, poets for all the ages, a wise man like Pitacus, a turbulent oligarch like Alcæus, and a whole population bent on pleasures of every degree of refinement. No wonder that it was soon exhausted. Now the Sapphic stanza comes the nearest of all metrical forms to expressing this eager, active, petulant, evanescent, popular genius. Its gaiety is melancholy and saddening, its passion is a pain, its worship fanciful. The Alcaic stanza—which has, like its rival, been made more or less familiar to modern readers by modern poets—cannot divide with it this honor of being racy of the soil. Alcæus had travelled much and he reflected a wider culture than that of Sappho.

If the stanza really existed before Sappho, as may be inferred from Hephaestion's statement that Alcaeus wrote poems in it, it was none the less Lesbian. The grammarians Marius Victorinus and Atilius Fortunatianus call Alcaeus the discoverer and Victorinus places the invention among those which are attributed not to their author but to some usurper.<sup>1</sup> Another grammarian, Diomedes, how-

<sup>1</sup> *Eo frequentius usa sit Sappho quam Alcaeus repertor.* MARIUS VICTORINUS on the second ode of Horace's first book. PUTSCHII *Grammaticæ Latinae*, p. 2610. Hoc metrum tricola habet paria, quartam,

ever, is equally positive on the side of Sappho.<sup>1</sup> In the opinion of C. F. Neue, it is true that Alcæus could have borrowed from Sappho, but equally true that whoever invented the Alcaic stanza, if he wished to soften the masculine vigor of that verse, would have hit upon the Sapphic spontaneously.<sup>2</sup> Not only is the origin of the stanza in question but its character has often been misunderstood. Hephaestion, Plotius, Beda, and Servius, according to Neue had correct views; while Diomedes was wrong in calling it trochaic brachycatalectic trimeter, and Marius Victorinus equally in error when he attempted to derive it from trochaic and iambic formulas. Some other curious errors were made. For example, the notation  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$  was often called Pindaric-Sapphic. The name of Sappho was also given to this formula,  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$  and also to this  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$ , as well as this  $\text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$ . It is almost needless

brevem clausulam, sumptum est ab Alcaeo. Sappho quoque frequenter eo utitur. ATILIUS FORTUNATIANUS on Horatian metres, PUTSCHIU, p. 2681.

<sup>1</sup> Hendecasyllabum, quod Sappho poetria invenit. DIOMEDES  
Liber III. PUTSCHIIUS p. 508.

<sup>14</sup> Quum autem eadem Alcaeus usus sit jam Hephaestio de metris c. 14 inventionis laudem scribit ambiguum esse. Confidentius Marius Victorinus p. 2610, et Atilius Fortunatianus p. 2681, Alcæum repertorem, ab Alcæo sumptum metrum praedicant, et 2494 Victorinus in iis ponit, quae non ab inventoribus appellata sint, sed ab his, qui crebrius usurpaverint. Tamquam inventum a Sapphone nomen accepisse, censet Diomedes p. 500, 508. Licet autem potuerit Alcæus, a Sapphone hoc metrum assumere, certe qui semel Alcaicum versum finxerat, si masculinum eius vigorem vellet ad molliores affectus remittere, sponte ei Sapphicus versus accurebat, hac sola re Alcaico impar, quod tenuiter a trochaico ordine incipiens in thesin cadit, quum ille a robusto introitu iambico in arsin desinat. Versum Sapphicum, cuius recte ostendunt Hephaestio p. 78, Plotius 2654, Beda p. 2377, et ipse Servius Centim. p. 1825, idem Servius p. 1819. C. F. NEUE, op. cit. p. 12. Most of the page references in this paragraph are to the work of Putschius already cited.

to say that nothing of the kind is extant in the fragments of Sappho. The proper Sapphic strophe is so constructed that the first and second verses are complete by themselves, while to the third verse the Adonic is connected by a hyphenated word often, and in general without hiatus, though in some cases an intervening pause sets off the short line from the strophe. The first and second verses are not joined to the third, for they end with a marked hiatus, never a broken word. Sappho, indeed, admitted an apostrophe, Catullus and Horace elision, but this license was also practiced in trimeter and hexameter of both Greeks and Romans. It is said that all the verses in Sappho's first book of poems were in this form. The testimony of the ancients is given indirectly on this point. For example Plotius remarked that asynarteta affected metre in two ways, either by displacing a metrical form or by antipathy, and it was asynarteta that Sappho used throughout her whole first book. Hephaestion gave the first place among metres mingled by antipathy to this Sapphic epichoriambic, as composed of trochaic and choriambic, unequal metrical forms. To this must be added the testimony of the scholiast on Pindar, who remarked that the octosyllabic Sapphics took up the whole first book of what Sappho wrote. The manifest discrepancy occasioned here by the word "octosyllabic" is thus explained by Neue: *Ad hendecasyllabum enim Sapphicum omnes ab eo Scholiasta versus referri, qui a dipodia trochaica et choriambo incipiunt, paullo ante, exposuimus; unde nunc etiam quod testatur, tamquam de vero Sapphico dictum accipiendum est.*

The most striking thing about this stanza, even to the casual observer, is that it is rounded out in the same manner as the hexameter. So noteworthy is this epode as it was called by the grammarians that Terentianus Mau-



rus insisted on attributing to Sappho whole poems in the Adonic line, and he contrived or copied an absurd cento<sup>1</sup> to show how these must have sounded :

*Cætera pars versus pedibus finita duobus  
Tale solet colon subungere, Primus ab oris,  
Continuasse pedes istos in carmine solos  
Dicitur hæc eadem præclara poetria Sappho :*

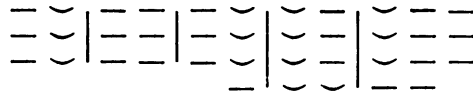
*Fingere nobis  
Tale licebit  
Primus ab oris  
Troius heros,  
Perdita flammis  
Pergama linquens,  
Exul in altum  
Vela resolvit.  
Sæpe repulsus  
Ausone Terra  
Mœnia fessis  
Sera locavit  
Unde Latinum  
Post genus ortum,  
Altaque magnæ  
Mœnia Romæ.*

As Neue remarks, it is not to be believed that Terentianus ever saw a poem credited to Sappho in this form. It is doubtful if any writer of merit would venture such a performance except in some jocose and trifling humor. Even the example of Boethius in the seventh metrum, first book, of his Consolation of Philosophy only shows what a man may do to while away weary hours in prison. Nevertheless Marius Victorinus also attributed the use of continuous Adonics to Sappho and quoted part of the above cento as an illustration. How this notion arose, it is difficult to see unless there was some incorrect scansion of the previous lines of the stanza properly known as that of Sappho. Even among intelligent grammarians, there has been more or less divergence of opinion as to the most

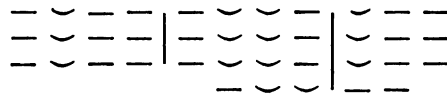
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<sup>1</sup> PUTSCHIIUS, op. cit. p. 2431.

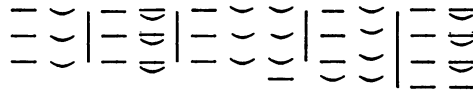
accurate description of the metrical formula. For example Diomedes took the following to be the correct prosodic notation :



though he admitted that others preferred to scan the stanza in this manner :



George Buchanan, the eminent Scotch Latinist, preferred the following ambiguous formula :



Neue agreed with Buchanan but added accent marks to indicate the particular syllable on which the emphasis fell in recitation, thus:  $\acute{\text{—}} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \parallel \acute{\text{—}} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—} \text{—}$ . On the other hand Dr. Ambros in his History of Music adopted the notation of Diomedes, while agreeing with Neue as to the proper places for the accents. Now, it is plain that whatever notion these various critics had of the relation between the long and the short syllable, they were agreed as to the *cæsuræ*. They would all have divided the verses into semicolons, to use the ancient grammatical phrase, with one important accent to each subdivision. These semicolons, each with its single strong syllable, answer respectively to the feet of the hexameter. The only difficulty with this comparison is that there is one semicolon too many. If the short line which ends the stanza were part of the third verse the parallel would be exact. But there was good reason for this slight variation. The proportions of the stanza naturally suggested

such a modification, and the movements of the dance, even its simpler forms, enforced the suggestion. The dance among the Greeks doubtless consisted of a great variety of figures, but there were two or three which all will agree were in frequent use. In one of these a group stood facing the caller, and then as he sang, danced forward and back, or forward in successive repetitions of an identical movement, as in the Spartan exercise, the metrum for which is so admirably imitated by Colonel Mure in the line :

"Forward, boys, and merrily foot it, and dance it better and better still."<sup>1</sup>

Then there was the Circean round of incantation. This dance was in fact like most magical practices a mere abbreviation and corruption of what belonged to religion. The more elaborate figure consisted first in a march past the altar on the right hand, a return on the left. To these movements corresponded the parts of the choral hymns called respectively strophe and antistrophe. "Finally," says Victorinus, "standing in front of the idol, they sang the close of the hymn, which was the epode."<sup>2</sup> Now, whatever the figure adopted by Sappho, it is plain that her stanza suggests rapid movement thrice repeated, and a sudden, complete change at the last. It may have been a series like this : Forward, back, forward, then a mere flinging or swaying of the body while the dancer remained in one spot. In any case the due proportion of the dance would have precluded a musical or metrical movement interrupted when half completed and replaced with something quite different. Practically this was a question of rhythm, in which, as has been said, the music of the Greeks almost exclusively consisted. That the dance should have shaped the metrical form was natural, since all the music of the Greeks

<sup>1</sup> MURE, *op. cit.* Vol. III, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> PUTSCHUS, *op. cit.* p. 2501.

was accompanied with mimetic action—dancing posture and gesture.

It is the fashion gently to depreciate the Sapphic monostrophe, but Longinus and Dionysius are still good witnesses to its effect upon men born to the Greek language. Sappho herself, in the little that time has spared of her verse, is one still better. Her loves, her angers, and her prayers, take this form in preference to any other. Wedding hymns and other poems in forms more staid may have made her popular in Mitylene, but they were obviously part of the business of a trained versemaker and musician. That she should have written little or much comparatively in her favorite stanza does not affect the question of its value. What she is known to have written in it indicates the peculiar place which it held in her esteem. In the same way the use which later writers made of it, as long as the ancient prosody held sway, shows its abiding popularity. From Melinno down to the present day its votaries have been many. The ode of Horace most frequent on modern tongues is in this metre; and it is probably the favorite metre even now for occasions when original Latin verse is appropriate. But Sappho's management of this verse form has never been rivalled. In Melinno's little poem, *To Rome*,<sup>1</sup> there was a stiffness which showed that what was free in its beginnings as an improvisation had been fettered and that careless song had degenerated into literary formula. The pristine freedom was never recovered, not even by Catullus. What Sappho would have said to Horace would certainly have been something like this: "You comprehend my device, but you have no ideas to which it is suited. You are a cold-hearted philosopher. You have not tested the bitterness of love and anger as I know them. You have only good-

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<sup>1</sup> *Anthologia Lyrica*, etc., Theodorus Bergk (Teubner) p. 520.

natured ways and a contempt for the world. You should have let my stanza alone."

In fact, Horace, to fit the stanza to his purpose, was obliged to make an important restriction. The light, rapid movement of Sappho's verse was much facilitated by the frequent, though not uniform, use of a trochee in the second foot of the three verses of the monostrophe. But the Roman poet required a slower, heavier movement; and so he made it a rule to use two long syllables invariably where Sappho would only have used them occasionally. He was followed by Statius and Prudentius, as well as by most of those who attempted verses in this form. Seneca, however, took Horace's spondee to be, as in hexameter, interchangeable with a dactyl, and promptly put three syllables into some of the songs of his plays, thus completely destroying the line as Sappho meant it, but making no change that a Latin ear would be startled by after Horace. At the revival of learning there was much discussion of this matter, as there was upon nearly every other literary point, and Buchanan was censured for violating Horatian precedent in his version of the Ninetieth Psalm. He was defended by reference to the practice of two famous poets of his own age, now forgotten, Paulus Melissus and Michaelis Marullus, and to the more authoritative usage of Sappho herself.<sup>1</sup>

To all these later poets the stanza came as a finished product, with its three long lines and the short Adonic echo that gave it completeness. Allusion has been made to the learned inquiries of Neue and others who look to

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<sup>1</sup>Caeterum, si qua culpa est ab Horatio deflectere, non solus peccavit Buchananus, sed licentiae (si modo licentia fit dicenda) socios habuit maximos sui seculi poetas, Paulum Melissum, et Michaellem Marullum, quem divinum vatem Muretus nominat. GEORGII BUCHANANI, *Opera Omnia recognita, etc.*, curante THOMA RUDDIMANNO. *Libellus de metris Buchananacis*, p. 2.

the Alcaic verse and in other directions for the origin of the Sapphic stanza. But the simplest theory would be just to think of Sappho and her predecessors trying to adapt the hexameter line, that of Homer and Virgil, "stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man," to the needs of song and dance among the light-hearted, light-footed Lesbians. Virgil caught sight of the problem and tried to solve it in the delicious refrain of his eighth eclogue, "Ducite ab urbe domum, mea carmina, ducite Daphnim." If one arranges this line by its pauses in the step-ladder form so common with the semi-humorous poets of the present day, one may easily see how far it is in purpose from the ordinary heroic verse of the Aeneid or the Iliad. Now the pauses of the Sapphic stanza answer to the divisions of the hexameter, except that each foot has been expanded into what the old grammarians called a semicolon. There are just six of these semicolons, just as there are six feet in the hexameter. But the metrical puzzle was not wholly disentangled. The characteristic thing about the hexameter is its ending, when it seems to turn upon itself to make its movement complete. If this ending were thrust into the third verse of the Sapphic stanza, the lame conclusion would be evident. So the poets made the third line just like its predecessors and tacked on the cadence of the hexameter in a line by itself. The result was one in which the finest beauties of the old heroic line were saved to those in whose hearts it rang continually, and yet the singers and dancers had their way, too.













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